



THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

NEWS

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The Cleveland Museum of Art and MOCA Cleveland Present a Permanent Collection Exhibition Focused on Geometry in Art

CMA@ MOCA's The Persistence of Geometry: Form, Content and Culture in the Collection of The Cleveland Museum of Art Exhibition on View at MOCA Cleveland

CLEVELAND (June 7, 2006) — The Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) and the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland (MOCA) today announced the opening of CMA@ MOCA's **The Persistence of Geometry: Form, Content and Culture in the Collection of The Cleveland Museum of Art**, on view

June 9 through August 20, 2006, in the main galleries of MOCA Cleveland, located at 8501 Carnegie Avenue.

The exhibition was curated by Dr. Lowery Stokes Sims, guest curator and president of The Studio Museum in Harlem, who worked with Tom Hinson, curator of photography at CMA and project coordinator for **The Persistence of Geometry**. The exhibition includes works of art from CMA's permanent collection and focuses on the universality of geometry in the collection and throughout the history of art.

General admission to MOCA is \$4; \$3 for students and seniors with valid ID; children under 12 enter free. Courtesy of Sky Bank, entry to MOCA is free on Fridays. CMA and MOCA members receive free daily admission.

"The Cleveland Museum of Art's partnership with MOCA Cleveland has given the northeast Ohio audience an opportunity to enjoy the best of both institutions, and has enabled CMA to continue to provide a world-class arts experience as our \$258 million renovation and expansion project continues," said Timothy Rub, CMA director. "Having a renowned leader like Lowery Sims curate this exhibition only heightens the significance of this collaboration."

The Persistence of Geometry places historical works from CMA's permanent collection into a contemporary context at MOCA Cleveland. "Although MOCA is continually dedicated to the most recent art available, this exhibition complements MOCA's cutting-edge program, provides context, shows cause and effect, and traces various connections over time," said Jill Snyder, MOCA director. "In the long term, the collaboration is a declaration of support for contemporary art. In Cleveland's peer cities, contemporary art thrives best when there is both a flourishing contemporary museum and an encyclopedic museum that also supports current art."

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Comprising almost 140 objects from CMA's permanent collection, this exhibition presents work from a wide array of artistic eras, from ancient China, Egypt, Africa, Greece, Rome and the Americas, as well as Byzantine and Medieval art from Europe. Traditional European and American paintings and a wide variety of contemporary works also will be featured. Objects were selected from all curatorial departments at CMA, including: paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs, ceramics, textiles and decorative arts.

The Persistence of Geometry seeks to demonstrate the continuity of ideas usually associated with modern and contemporary art to geometrical shapes from the earliest epochs of human creativity. "When contemporary and modern art become the focal point of an exhibition, traditional art from cultures in Africa, the Americas, the Pacific and Asia blends into the background to be viewed only as a secondary form of art," commented Dr. Sims. "This exhibition combines artworks from vastly different cultures and artistic periods demonstrating the continuous occurrence of certain geometrical shapes in art which unify all forms of art and historical eras. It will provide an opportunity for the public to understand forms and shapes as carriers of meaning that are both specific to a particular cultural context and universal in their immediate appeal."

The exhibition's concept was influenced by two significant projects in 20th century art, including the 1931 publication *Foundations of Modern Art*, written by the French artist Amedée Ozenfant, and the 1947 exhibition *40,000 Years of Modern Art*, organized at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London by the English poet, critic and essayist Sir Herbert Read, photographer W. G. Archer and aficionado Robert Melville. *Foundations of Modern Art* put modern art in general terms for the lay public, discussing various artistic movements and emphasizing the continuity of modern art and the geometric forms that are found in all art and cultures. For Ozenfant, these forms composed the geometry of life. Ozenfant was also associated with the Purism movement that supported the theory that certain unconscious conditions reappear as shapes and patterns throughout time. *40,000 Years of Modern Art* established that modern art developed through the adaptation of certain attributes from other types of world art. This notion confirmed that a definite universality exists in all art through the inevitable reoccurrence of certain elements that are then considered modern art. Circles, squares, diamonds, rectangles, triangles, hexagons, octagons, pentagons, arcs, swirls and three-dimensional shapes, such as cubes, pyramids and spheres can be found throughout the exhibition.

The Persistence of Geometry is organized into four thematic sections that present the artworks outside of the usual hierarchical positioning that separates western, modern and contemporary art from cultural and tribal art, while translating the geometrical occurrences into symbolic meaning.

Shapes and Planes

Exhibition highlights include: Jacob Lawrence's (American, 1917-2000) casein painting *Creative Therapy* (1949); and Richard Long's slate (British, b. 1945) *Cornwall Circle* (1991).

Sacred and Profane Geometry

Exhibition highlights include: The Egyptian papyrus *Book of the Dead of Hori* (1069-945 BC); The South Indian bronze sculpture *Nataraja, Shiva as the King of Dance* (11th century); and Frank Lloyd Wright's (American, 1867-1959) design made by Linden Glass Co. *Casement Window* (c. 1904).

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Geometry and Modern Art

Exhibition highlights include: Frank Stella's painting (American, b. 1936) *Gray Scramble (Single), VIII* (1968); Paul Strand's gelatin silver print (American, 1890-1976) *Lathe, Akeley Shop, New York* (1923); Sean Scully's color woodcut (American, b. 1945) *Planes of Light* (1991); and Georgia O'Keeffe's oil on canvas (American, 1887-1986) *Morning Glory with Black* (1926).

Lines, Waves, Patterns, and Fractals

Exhibition highlights include: Ettore Sottsass' design (Italian, b. 1917) made by Memphis Firm *Fruit Bowl* (1982); Jackson Pollock's oil on canvas (American, 1912-1956) *Number 5* (1950); Chuck Close's oil on canvas (American, b. 1940) *Paul III* (1996); Martin Puryear's red cedar and pine sculpture (American, b. 1941) *Alien Huddle* (1993-1995); and a Pennsylvanian cotton and wool *Coverlet* (1837).

The Persistence of Geometry coincides with CMA@ MOCA's second mezzanine exhibition, **Transitions: Linda Butler and Philip Brutz Photographs**.

The Persistence of Geometry: Form, Content and Culture in the Collection of The Cleveland Museum of Art was organized by The Cleveland Museum of Art in collaboration with MOCA Cleveland and was made possible through generous grants from the Kulas Foundation and the John P. Murphy Foundation. Additional support was provided by The Contessa Gallery. The Cleveland Museum of Art and MOCA Cleveland receive support from the Ohio Arts Council. Promotional support provided by 90.3 WCPN.

About The Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland

Since its inception in 1968 as The New Gallery, later known as the Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, and now the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, MOCA has been reinventing the art experience. As Cleveland's forum for interpreting culture through contemporary visual art, the museum connects visitors to the dynamic art and ideas of our time. As a gathering place for experiencing contemporary art and culture, MOCA Cleveland pushes the boundaries of innovation, creativity and expression.

All of MOCA's exhibitions and programs are presented with major support from American Greetings, The Cleveland Foundation, The George Gund Foundation, National City, Nesnadny + Schwartz, The Ohio Arts Council, The Kelvin and Eleanor Smith Foundation and the continuing support of our Board of Directors, patrons and members.

About CMA's Permanent Collection

The permanent collection of The Cleveland Museum of Art demonstrates a broad range of human creativity spanning world cultures and history. The collection has grown continuously since the museum's founding in 1916. Holdings of Western art begin with Mediterranean art and progress through Medieval, Renaissance and 18th and 19th century European art. American art is well represented at CMA, while contemporary art continues to grow in stature.

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The museum's distinguished collection of Asian art includes works from China, Japan, Korea, India, the Himalayas, and Southeast Asia. The museum also holds smaller collections of art of the ancient Americas and African Art.

About The Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art is one of America's leading comprehensive museums. Its permanent collection is world renowned for its quality and breadth, spanning 6,000 years. The Museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and art acquisitions. For more information on the Museum, its holdings, programs, services and events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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CMA@ MOCA's The Persistence of Geometry: Form, Content and Culture in the Collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art

Geometrical Theme Illuminated Through FREE Exhibition Programming

Directors' Perspectives: A Dialogue on Exhibiting and Collecting Panel Discussion

Saturday, July 29

2-3:30 p.m.

**Bolton Theater, Cleveland Play House Complex
8500 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland**

Join CMA Director Timothy Rub, MOCA Director Jill Snyder and CMA@ MOCA Guest Curator Lowery Stokes Sims, president of The Studio Museum in Harlem, for a panel discussion moderated by WCPN/WVIZ's Dee Perry. The panel will explore the context and presentation of permanent collections and special exhibitions, and will focus on how the layout of a permanent collection can advance an institution's aspirations to reconsider historical perspectives, and facilitate community outreach and scholarship. This ticketed panel discussion is FREE to the public. Tickets will be available (after June 1, 2006) at no charge through CMA's Ticket Center at **1-888-CMA-0033**.

CMA@ MOCA Exhibition Tours

Wednesdays (June 14, June 28, July 12, July 26, August 9)

Sundays (June 25, July 23, August 20)

1:30 p.m. Wednesdays and Sundays

MOCA Cleveland

FREE public tours will be available featuring highlights from the **Transitions: Linda Butler and Philip Brutz Photographs** exhibition, **The Persistence of Geometry: Form, Content, and Culture in the Collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art** exhibition and MOCA's **Wendy L. Moore Emerging Artist Series: Sarah Kabot** exhibition. Tour groups will meet in the main lobby at MOCA.

It's Geometric! Family Festival

Sunday, July 9

1-4 p.m.

MOCA Cleveland

Cultures from around the world incorporate geometric patterns into their art. Inspired by the diverse CMA collection on view at MOCA, this festival allows families and individuals of all ages to use a variety of materials to create their own geometric works of art. **It's Geometric!** is a FREE public event.

Public Information: For more information about the Cleveland Museum of Art and its events, please call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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